

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9613

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STADIS//////////

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MASS, IT

SUBJECT: MAAG CHIEF SERVICE BRANCH

FROM AMBASSADOR TO ASST. SECRETARY HARTMAN, EUR

1. MY MAAG CHIEF, GENERAL GEORGE JOHNSON, WILL BE LEAVING US IN AUGUST OF THIS YEAR. I UNDERSTAND THE QUESTION OF THE RANK AND SERVICE OF HIS SUCCESSOR HAS NOT BEEN RESOLVED AS YET. GENERAL JOHNSON FEELS STRONGLY THAT HE OUGHT TO BE REPLACED BY ANOTHER AIR FORCE OFFICER OR THAT AT A MINIMUM HIS SUCCESSOR SHOULD NOT BE A U.S. NAVAL OFFICER. THERE ARE GOOD REASONS FOR HIS POSITION. I TEND TO AGREE WITH HIM.

2. THERE ARE ALREADY SEVERAL U.S. ADMIRALS IN ITALY (NAPLES) AND ONE U.S. ARMY GENERAL (VICENZA) BUT NO AIR FORCE FLAG OFFICER (ALWAYS EXCEPTING OF COURSE, THOSE ASSIGNED AT AFSOUTH). ANOTHER ADMIRAL WOULD ADD SOMEWHAT TO THE IMBALANCE. THE ITALIAN NAVY IS THE SMALLEST AND LEAST INFLUENTIAL OF THE ITALIAN SERVICES. THE DEFENSE ATTACHE IS A NAVY CAPTAIN AND BECAUSE OF THE HEAVY LOAD OF U.S. NAVY OPERATIONAL BUSINESS IN ITALY WILL LIKELY BE REPLACED BY ANOTHER. WE WOULD PREFER THAT THE MAAG CHIEF AND THE DATT NOT BE OF THE SAME SERVICE.

3. IN A CHOICE BETWEEN AN AIR FORCE OFFICER AND AN ARMY OFFICER, WE LEAN TOWARD THE FORMER PRIMARILY BECAUSE A GREAT DEAL OF MAAG BUSINESS HERE IS AIR FORCE RELATED: THE F-104S

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PRODUCTION PROGRAM, THE POSSIBLE SALE OF THE YF-16 OR THE

LOCKHEED LANCER, AIR TO GROUND MISSILES, ETC.

4. I HOPE YOU WILL BE ABLE TO INSERT OUR CONCERNS ON THIS
MATTER IN THE PROPER PLACES. VOLPE

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